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# OLVERINE'S A CRAY HAWK Story By Dick Kraus

YOUNG GRAY HAWK threw the net from him with a graceful motion of his slender, bronzed arm, Then, pulling assily against the tug of the current, he drew the net toward him. As it emerged, dripping, from the surface, the Indian boy smiled to sea that it was filled with wriggling, silvery fish,

"Enough fishing for one night!" he exclaimed to himself. "My mother will bake these in the embers of the fire and my father

will be pleased?"

Suddenly, he paused, head half-twisted. There was a sound downstream, a gentle, lapping sound that he had not heard before! He waited, motionless, eyes exploring the stratch of water that even now was growing dim. in

the oncoming twilight. Far in the distance, he saw a tail, hulking warrlor wading upstream, bucking the driving current. On his shoulder, the man carried a long, canvas-wrapped burden. Approaching the bank opposite Gray Hawk, he clambered out of the water. In a moment, he was lost

among the trees. The son of the Otapi chief waited a few moments. Then he waded across the stream

himself, and moved down to where the stranger had disappeared.

"Here is his print in the wet sand." He traced the marking with his finger. "He is a big man-as big as the Wolverine!" The Wolverine was a member of the Piute

tribe who had left the lodge of his fathers, and now lived as an outlaw in the forest. He was ruthless and cruel, a deadly forman, and he preyed on the white man and the Indian allkel

Spying a few strung beads that had been eaught on a thorny bush, Gray Hawk quickly ratrieved tham and slipped them in his pouch. Then he turned.

"My father and the elders of the Otapi must know of this!" he excinimed. "If the Wolverine is lurking in our land, no rood can come to our peopla!"

YOR AN HOUR, he dog-trotted swiftly through the dark green aisles of the forest Coming out on a ledge above the Otapi camp he saw his father and several elders standing before the council firs. Facing them were three white men, each bearing a rifle. One of them was shouting angrily, "I tel

TRAIL

you. Gray Eagle, someone broke into the trad ing post at Baker's Mill and made off with six fine Sharps rifles! And the varmint was a red skin! We saw his moccasin tracks leading int the forest!"

Gray Eagle's face was troubled, but he lifted a calming hand. "This may be so, my friend. But it was no

one of my braves. We Otapi live at peace wit the white man. Wa would not rob him?" "Maybe so!" the buckskin-clad ride

grunted. "But it was an Indian-and you're the onl Injuns in these parts. So we're holding yo responsible, Gray Esgla! Get back those rifle ... or your tribe is going to be in a mess of

trouble!"

With that, the three riders wheeled the horses and galloped away from the Otas camp. As they vanished in the darkness, Ora Hawk slipped up to his father's side an caught his arm, "My father," he began, "I wa fishing by the water's edge . . . "

The chief looked at his son angrily, "D you not see that we have important business; he asked. "Why do you bother us with you fishing?"

The boy waited for a moment, then begg arain. "I was fishing by the water's edge. As I wa

about to return to camp, I saw a man crossin the stream below me. He was bearing a los on his shoulder. He was a tall, strong man. found his tracks where he entered the fore -and there I saw these, caught on a bush!"

He held out the strung beads in his pair His father glanced at them.

"These appear to have the design of the Piute tribe! But what of that?" "The Plute!" Grav Hawk said eagerly, "This man-might be not have been the Wolverine? He is a Piute. And only he would dare to stanl white man's rifles like that! Let us follow

him and find out!"

Gray Ragle shook his head slowly, "No. my boy," he said, "I do not think it was the Wolverine you saw, He is said to be many miles away In the land of the high mountains. The man you saw was probably a Piute brave carrying ventson back to his squaw. We will not follow him."

With diseppointment, Gray Hawk listened

to his father.

But thet night, he could not sleep. Rising at last, he aligned noiselessly out of the tence and hurried into the forest. Tomshawk and knife attached to his belt, he sped slong the forest trails until he reached the spot along the river's edge where he had last seen the track of the mysterious, tall stranger.

FOOT by foot and yard by yard, he trailed the prints through the forest. At times they were clear and visible on open stretches of ground. Sometimes they were so faint that he could only trace them with the esensitive tips of his outstretched fingers. Sometimes he lost them entirely on rocky soil and he had to circle, like a hunting dog, to pick them up again,

At last, as the first rays of the sun were beginning to lighten the castern skies, Gray Mank looked up to see the dark opening of a cave, half hidden on a hillside behind a luxuriant growth of creepers. The tracks led straight toward it, and disappeared into it.

Grav Hawk hesitated for a moment. Then he clutched his tomahawk tightly. "I have come this far," he resolved. "And I

will not stop now!" Cautiously, bent low, he entered the dank, stark cave.

At first he could see nothing. Then, as his eves became used to the dark, he moved slowly Forward. Around a bend in the passage, he huddenly stonged short. For there, lying before him, was a canvas-wrapped package-the same that had been on the shoulder of the man crossing the stream.

He reached forward end pulled back the cenves. His hands touched cold, herd metel! "The riflent" he exclaimed. Suddenly a harsh, grating voice echoad his

words. "Well done, stripling! The rifles! But they are my rifles now and you will never tell of

where you found them!" Gray Hawk whirled. There, fading him, with his brawny erms blocking the entrance to the cave, was the Wolverine. Half-crouched, the hure Piute warrior was laughing in mirthless trlumph. "I knew you were following me, so what better place

could I jeed you to then this? And now-" Without warning, he lunged forward et Gray Hawk

Desperately, the boy struck with his tomahawk. But It hit the Wolverine's shoulder a glancing blow, scarcely burting him. The next moment. Gray Hawk felt himself seized and dashed against the rough cave wall. Heart pounding furiously in his chest, he saw his implacable foe coming toward him, gleaming knife held high in the air. "No!" Grav Hawk gasped. He twisted eway

and dove for the Piute brave's ankles. But he was cruelly kicked in the side. And, as he lay on the floor of the cave, half stunned, he saw the Wolverine lift the knife again.

But even as he recoiled from the cruel weapon. Grey Hawk heard a whistling sound and saw a feathered shaft hise through the air, and bury Itself in his enemy's erm! The

Wolverine clutched at it, dropping his knife. Gray Mawk stared unbelievebly at the cave entrance. There he saw his father, holding his mighty bow. Behind him were several of the Otani braves. Through the forest they had come, and they had saved his life! "Father-you followed me!"

"RAY EAGLE inclined his head, "If my son is willing to spend a night in the forest on a wild goose chase, I must do the same!" He looked at the rifles lying by the cave wall, "So it was the Welverine you saw, He broke the white man's law . . . and, we will teke him beck so he can suffer the white man's

THE END

Gray Heack's adventurous exploits appear in every issue of MONTE HALE WESTERN!

justice!"







































. AND FOUND OUT THAT



NEVER

















... SO LET'S









BAH! YOU COWARDS HIM MYSELF!



BUT FARO LEE

1 SEE! EVIDENTLY THEY WERE AFRAID YOU'D FIND EVIDENCE TO PROVE RANSOM WAS BEHIND YOU FATHER'S PEATH, BUT I'VE LEFADY FOUND PROOF THIS CAVE-IN WAS RIGGED AND WHEN WE EXAMINE THE MORTSAGE PAPER KNOW WELL HAVE E







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Mexico.

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